



Dustin's Party Time by **robyschel**

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Summary: Two years after the Snow Ball, Dustin is very depressed and in search of new adventures. He ends up in the forbidden area of Hawkins known as Rotten Eggs. There, he meets Hannah, an 18 year old girl completely different from him in a few points, but just the same in others.

1. Dark Legion

Author's note: I just wanted to do Dustin some justice after Stacey. Enjoy!

April 29, 1987, Wednesday

If there was something annoying was school. Even worse was chemistry. And it was annoying to see how his friends were interested in that garbage. He didn't want to know the difference between cations and anions, much less because noble gases thought they were the best. He just wanted to go home and listen to his funeral songs while lamenting the life he wanted to have, but hadn't even gotten close. That's because he was only sixteen.

Knowing that party well, you'd never think it was Dustin I'm talking about, but it was Dustin himself. You don't know what happened in the next two years and how Dustin stopped being the cute little boy we knew so much to someone who lived only because he was already alive, but if he could, he wouldn't have chosen that option. I mean, deep down he still was kind, but he didn't feel like showing that side. Not at all. He just wanted to do his chores and then listen to his songs until he fell asleep.

Of course, his friends had noticed his change in behavior. They were not that dense, but Mike and Lucas were busy with their respective girlfriends, and Will still faced some demons. Result: they didn't know how deep in depression he was. If they did, they'd be so worried they'd do everything they could to fix it, but no one noticed, and Dustin made no point in saying or showing.

He was not such a handsome kid and he was nerdy and chubby. Dustin was aware of this as well as he knew it would be difficult to have the eyes of some girl, but he had never let that upset him. He was confident that day, and then it struck him that his love life might be a little more complicated than he had imagined. The slap in the face, the shock, and Dustin found himself crying, when Nancy saved him. And it was not just for one night. She was being a lot cooler and made a point of talking to him whenever she could, but Dustin knew

he could not be carried by Nancy forever and that it only tied her life. Not to mention that he would never have a chance with her. Then, he stood back until Nancy went to college and did not realize the drastic change in his behavior.

It hurt too much to see the girl he liked with his best friend. At least if she had fallen in love with someone else, it would not be so bad, but Dustin had to put up with affectionate exchanges. It was as if they did on purpose to remark the fact he had lost. That's why it had changed.

Mike had talked to his mother about it, but she said it must be puberty. Sometimes we are more affected than others and more than we want, so they were reassured and eventually lost a friend. They just did not know it yet.

Dustin simply thought there was no more reason to live, since he would never succeed wherever he went. At least he thought so. And that killed him little by little.

"Mr. Henderson," Mr. Clarke said as soon as the bell rang, and everyone started to store their materials, "can I talk to you for a moment?"

Mr. Clarke had been promoted to high school teacher for the joy of the boys. And to our joy too, because without his participation, this story would not happen.

"We'll meet you outside, Dustin!" Mike said as the whole group prepared to leave. It was their last lesson and they planned to go to Lucas' house to play on his new Atari 7800.

"Um, guys, I have to, um ... help my mother with this thing. So, we'll talk tomorrow."

None of them noticed Mr. Clarke's reproachful look, but soon it would not go unnoticed.

"Oh, okay." Mike said in surprise. Dustin had never refused to play video games before. Even if he was in this new ... morbid phase, he always would.

The boys decided to leave then, but Max stayed a little longer staring at him until she decided to leave.

"What is it, my Lord?" Dustin spoke the same way as before with his teacher, which made the man happy. Perhaps not everything has been lost.

"Dustin," Mr. Clarke sighed, thinking of a way to mention, "I've noticed a change in your behavior lately, and I wanted to make sure it's okay."

Dustin didn't know how to respond. He didn't want to worry Mr. Clarke, but to say that it was all right was to lie because he was not well. In fact, he wanted to stay in the middle of the street and wait for a truck to hit him, but he could not do that. If he survived, he would have to live with the consequences.

"It's not alright." Dustin was sincere and waited a second to continue searching for the right words, "You know," he decided to be honest, "I like Max, but she chose Lucas. I'm sure that in time this will pass."

For a moment the teacher felt sorry. Dustin was a wonderful boy and he didn't deserve it. Not that Lucas wasn't. He didn't want any of his boys to suffer, but broken hearts are a part of life.

"I understand." Mr. Clarke didn't want to make Dustin more embarrassed than he already was, "It's life ... You have to find new activities and soon this phase will pass."

New activities ... But what the hell was he going to do in Hawkins? Cinema, arcade, the playground ... and that was it. They also had some ballads, but Dustin was a minor for it. Unless he went to the forbidden part of town. But as said it was forbidden. I mean, it was not forbidden. Only the delinquents lived there and so it was not very safe.

Dustin had changed his style a little. He wasn't so flashy anymore. He had changed his blue, white and red cap to a gray jeans one. His clothes were white, black, and gray. Maybe they wouldn't realize he didn't belong on that side.

Dustin walked toward his house. He wasn't riding his bike anymore. He would rather use the walk to think. And he was thinking of the southern part of town. He had never dared to step there, but he needed new adventures. Away from his friends. He needed some time alone and might find something there. Dustin wanted to try hard, but there was still that little part that was afraid. There were rumors and myths of what was going on there. Deaths too. But damn, he had faced several Demogorgans. What was a guy with a gun near that? Clearly a very scary guy, but he had to go. Even if they killed him, he wouldn't mind much.

It wasn't very nice, but Dustin thought he could go unnoticed and get to know better that part of town. He was afraid of what he would find, but at least it would be an adventure he might tell a girl one day and conquer it.

His thoughts automatically led him to that area. There was nothing different along the way. It was only half way, a beautiful walk.

He knew he was in the right place when the town began to look darker. And every now and then he saw a guy or other with a beard, half torn clothes and/or chewing open-mouthed gum. They always stared at him. It was like a small town in Hawkins where all the locals knew each other and so knew very well when there was an intruder.

There were both new and clearly rusty trailers. It was not all bad, but it seemed that some people made a point of having their belongings spoiled like fashion, style. There only lived those who didn't have the money to live in a nobler neighborhood and they became really delinquents. Maybe he could join the gang? You never know. Dustin was open to new options. He wasn't so scared anymore. He wasn't as ghastly as the stories they told. But it was still day.

There was a moment when Dustin just couldn't bear to walk anymore. He walked enough to get there and wandered the streets for hours trying to find excitement. It was all very still and fallen. Nothing came close to the stories he had heard. And when he saw a cafeteria, he did not hesitate.

It was a dark place. The walls were black both inside and out. The

slogan of the place glowed in neon and was the most electric lighting they had. The light came from the candles, there were no windows. Dustin prayed the food was made with something electric so that it was faster.

He sat down at one of the booths and drummed his fingers at a pace as he thought of his life. Nothing exciting, always the same things.

When problems with the Upside Down began, Dustin was entering puberty, so he didn't realize he wanted more than that life. When things finally stopped, he was bored. And even more, he went to a place very far on foot to find nothing he could afford. Was it a sin to ask for more than the life he had?

"What do you want, brat?" He received that question followed by a knock at the back of his neck.

"Ouch!" He put his hand on the sore spot and massaged it, hoping the pain would pass. What a heavy hand!

"Boy, are you going to ask or not? I do not have all day."

The truth is that Dustin was so focused on his thoughts that the waitress had to call him a couple of times. And yet, only with the touch did he respond.

Dustin finally decided to face anyone who was rushing him. It was a girl. She appeared to be her age physically, but her posture was much older. It was as if she thought herself superior. Her arms were crossed, and her expression was impatient, but none of it matched her style. The girl wore jeans and a blouse with sleeves that reached her black elbows. She had made a sharp outline that hid her eyes by the mascara. Her red hair was trapped in a backward bun. She must have had more than five earrings in each ear, not counting the piercing on her left eyebrow and septum. She was all ... gothic.

She lifted her eyebrow, just the pierced one, to Dustin, tired of waiting, as he studied her. The truth was he was delighted. Somehow, she was the representation of what he expected to see there and underneath it all, she was *very* pretty.

"Ahh," He had not even looked at the menu, "do you have milkshake?"

The girl rolled her eyes.

"What flavor?"

"Cream."

He gave a nice look at the place. The walls were painted gray, but the sofas were black. It was like picking up a regular diner, darkening it, and then it was ready to be a Southern Hawkins diner. It seemed to be half fallen. As if it had been there a long time, but no one bothered to reform.

Dustin just saw the place, was tired and decided to come in, but maybe it had not been a good idea. They did not seem to have sanitary surveillance there. But it didn't matter. He was there to have adventure, even if his adventure was to have a great bellyache. He was thirsty at last.

The girl came back clearly annoyed. He didn't know if it was because the job was boring, because she couldn't anyone asking for a simple milk-shake anymore or because his presence was simply annoying. He expected none of them.

She put the glass in front of Dustin and he didn't hesitate to try it. He was still recovering from the long walk, needed refreshing. At the time he tasted he spat. He didn't think, just spat. It was nothing as he expected. It was much stronger. It was just weird.

"What did you put in here?!" She barely had time to leave, and again she rolled her eyes at him.

"Vodka, duuh."

"I ordered a milk-shake!" It was obvious. He made it clear what he wanted. Why the hell would she put vodka there?

"Cream, right? We only make cream with vodka here. If you don't want vodka, you'll have to ask for another flavor."

Okay that this girl was not very well with life, but that was not his problem. Dustin did not have to suffer from it.

"I do *not* want vodka, or anything! I just want a normal milk-shake!"

"We only have alcoholics here." The girl shrugged and turned away, tired of arguing.

Dustin didn't even know that milk-shake with alcohol existed! He didn't want to drink it. He had never seen what was fun about alcohol. Just wanted to freshen up. He should have just asked for water. And even more unhappy was the fact that it was obvious he was under 21 and she had not even asked for his identity.

"You can't just do one *without* vodka?"

The girl held herself so as not to yell at him. She hated that job, hated her life, and particularly that day he had woken up with the wrong foot. And suddenly there's that brat who knows nothing!

"Look, boy," she walked briskly toward Dustin, "there are rules here, do you understand? I can't serve what's not on the menu! If you want something light, you'd better go back to your little corner of the rich!"

"But why do you care about the rules if you don't even respect the law?"

The girl leaned against the table, coming face to face with Dustin.

"Just drink this shit and go!"

She entered the kitchen irritably and left Dustin alone in that place. It was weird. Like the town, the place was empty. Was she the only employee there?

Dustin was annoyed. He was there to relax and in the first place that he goes in he gets in trouble with a beautiful girl! He snorted, leaning against the couch. What had he been doing there? Maybe it had been a bad idea. Then he looked at the glass right in front of him and thought it would not hurt to drink a little. It was not every day that you get such good alcohol without being the right age. It was, after all, an adventure.

He didn't like the taste, but something about it was different. At least it was an adventure without his friends, and without Max and Lucas stuck together. The more he thought of his friends, the more he sucked the drink through the straw and in time began to lose control. It was a big glass of milk-shake and Dustin had never been drunk before, so that was enough to get wasted.

When the waitress came back, she hoped she would not find him there. She didn't care if he paid or not, she just wanted peace. In the meantime, she found Dustin soft, lying on the couch and laughing alone.

"Boy, what did you do?!" She stopped in front of the sofa side, where Dustin had left his legs out and ended up being pulled.

Dustin wrapped the girl's body with his legs and pulled her, causing her to fall on him. He laughed at what had happened while she stood up. She was leaning on her hands as Dustin gripped her waist to keep her from getting up.

"You are very beautiful!" He smiled, and she could not help but be delighted. Dustin had a very handsome smile, but soon she realized that some teeth were missing.

"What?!"

"What's your name?" She tried to break free, but Dustin could be strong when he wanted to. "Mine is Dustin."

The girl snorted but lowered her guard a little. Her arms were already getting tired of holding her weight so much.

"If I tell you, will you let me go?" Dustin smiled a little and nodded. She rolled her eyes once more. "It's Hannah."

"It's as beautiful as you ..." Dustin felt in paradise. That feeling was great and a beautiful girl, even weird, was on top of him. Was there something better?

"Let go of me, Justin!" Her moodiness returned in seconds and Dustin did as she asked.

"Okay, but it's Dustin!"

"Whatever!" Hannah replied standing up and rearranging her blouse that came out of the place with her fall.

"So, Hannah," Dustin sat down to talk to her better. "Can you serve me anymore?"

Hannah looked at him in surprise. Although drunk Dustin was pretty funny, she doubted he would have the courage if he were sober.

"I could ... but I won't!"

"C'mon!" He spoke in a way the words could barely get out of his mouth and Hannah laughed. "I bet you're too old to sell a drink! We are even!"

Dustin threw himself back on the couch and Hannah took the opportunity to make a milk-shake free alcohol for him. It wasn't on the menu, but she needed him to go away soon.

"Drink that!"

Dustin took the drink willingly thinking it had alcohol, and he was so drunk that he didn't realize that it didn't.

"Where do you live, Justin?"

He mumbled something she could understand parts of, drank it all and then collapsed on the couch.

2. Morbid Soul

April 29, 1987, Thursday

"Dustin! Dustin! DUSTIN!"

It was difficult to open his eyes because of the clarity, but he knew very well that it was his mother shouting. As he started to see again, Dustin realized that he was lying in the middle of the street.

"Dustin, for God's sake! What are you doing on Mrs. Hockstetter's yard?"

"What?" he said rubbing his eyes and sitting up. It was then that he realized that he was a few houses away from his. How had he ended up there?

"What is that smell? Have you been drinking, boy?"

"Mom..." He was not about to discuss that at that moment. He had migraines.

"Oh, boy! Come home now!"

Mrs. Henderson grabbed Dustin by the ear and dragged him into the house. He had to hear a speech about having been drunk being underage and for exaggerating to the point he fell asleep in the yard. Thank goodness it was close to home! No to even mention how embarrassed he made her in front of the neighbors. Oh, and he was grounded. Dustin tried to go to his room, but his mother forced him to take a shower before going to bed.

Dustin ruffed as he finally entered his sanctuary and threw himself on the bed, leaving the lights off.

It seemed like everything he had done was a dream. That such a Hannah didn't exist, even because he thought she was everything he had asked for in a woman. She didn't make things easy, she was beautiful and didn't care what others thought, dressing her way and acting as she wished. But she was older and that was where the dream ended. It was clear at the Snow Ball that he had no chance

with the older ones. He tried the younger ones at school later, but he was not successful either. Who could be his type then? When he realized that apparently no one, he got depressed.

At least the smell of the drink and the hangover proved that all that was real.

He sighed thinking about Hannah and how he was not going to see her again. At least for a while now that he was grounded. Unless he took a detour from his path.

He woke up early to do his hair in its best possible, clearly not the same as the Snow Ball, and ran off to school.

"I want you home immediately after school, you hear me, boy?"

"Yes, mom!"

He kissed her. Dustin only hoped that his friends were not stupid to ask his mother why he had missed school. His grades were already low, he came home drunk and then he was skipping. But he needed to see her again.

From his house the path was longer, and he thought about what he would say to Hannah. Dustin knew she wouldn't be happy to see him, but he had to try. Because if he was rejected, nobody would know.

Things got even more monotonous in the morning and he was scared. It was obvious that he was in the forbidden side, and he had the impression that someone would jump from behind a tree and assault or kill him. It was all worth it for her though.

You'd say Dustin was exaggerating. Too much idealizing a girl he barely knew, but she had something different. When she fell on him and they were so close to each other, Dustin felt something he had never felt before. And it was not perversion, because that he definitely had felt before!

There he was at this diner that no one attended. By the way, he realized that he had not paid for the baptized milk shake. It was a great excuse.

From the glass door Dustin saw Hannah in the same place as before with a face of boredom and she recognized him the moment he entered. She rolled her eyes at the time and snorted.

"What are you doing here?" she was already attacking him, and Dustin raised his hands in surrender.

"I just came to pay for the milk shake," he said already looking at the menu on the wall for the price and leaving the money on the counter right in front of her. "And I wanted to thank you for taking me back, even if you didn't leave me at home." He laughed, and she frowned. "You took me, did not you?"

"You murmured the address and I just understood the street." She shrugged and began to pack something on the counter that would probably never be fixed if she didn't want to run away from Dustin.

"You stay here all day alone? Does anyone come to this place?" Dustin tried to pull off a conversation with something he really wanted to know. Why was the cafeteria and the neighborhood so empty?

"If no one came here, I could not get on with it!" Dustin made a question face as if that answer was not enough. Hannah rolled her eyes again and gave in. "It's only the night here. No one moves in that area during the day."

"Then why do you open during the day?"

"Because I don't like to stay home."

"And why don't you li t..."

"Wow, boy! You're full of questions, aren't you?"

"Have some coffee with me, please!" Dustin pretended not to hear her and decided to risk his chance. "I pay!"

"I'm not leaving here!"

"Can't you do it right here?"

"What makes you think I have coffee here?"

"Please, Hannah. Just this one time. I swear if you don't like it, I'll never bother you again."

And Hannah decided to do it, because she was sure that she wasn't going to like.

"What kind of date does the girl make her own coffee and the guy's?"

"This is not a date!" Dustin smirked at her.

It was true. She didn't want it to be and he was using it against her. Clever. She ended up laughing when Dustin insisted on paying - and paid - the coffee she made for them.

"So, Hannah..." He had so, many questions to ask and she rolled her eyes, sitting directly in front of him, for his attempt to make conversation, "do you coming here a lot?"

"Really, Dustin?" At least she got his name right this time.

"Okay." He thought of something better to say. "Tell me what kind of girl you are."

"What do you mean?"

"I'll talk about myself as an example, okay?" Hannah wanted to laugh at Dustin's seriousness as he stopped to talk about himself. He really wanted to be honest. "You would not like me in your day to day. I'm the weird nerd nobody likes. I only have a few friends who are just like me, and success with girls is zero." Of course, there was El and Max, but one was even weirder and the other not so feminine. "I love science, I usually shoot good grades at school, I play Dungeons & Dragons and I love arcades."

"Why don't you always get good grades, Dustin? If you say you're so nerdy no girl wants to be near you."

"I'm kind of mad at life these last days."

"You rebelled? And that's why you decided to venture here?"

"What kind of girl are you, Hannah?" He shifted to the subject that interested him. He didn't want Hannah to know that he was in a state of depression almost without return. "Who would you be at school?"

"I graduated, but I was the weird Goth that no one spoke of either. And my father is the boss here, so everyone is afraid of me. Anyway, I like to be alone and listen to my punk bands."

"What do you mean, your dad's the boss?" Dustin dared to ask, and Hannah was surprised.

"You're getting yourself into a very dangerous place, Dustin!"

And that's what he wanted! Danger, adrenaline!

"I don't care. Speak!"

Hannah sighed trying to find the best words. She couldn't believe she was actually talking to that boy.

"The people here look more like a gang and not a 'forbidden neighborhood' as you say. And every gang has a leader. That would be my father."

"So, your father is the dangerous guy you don't want to be a friend or an enemy to?"

"Exactly. No one comes near me, afraid to make him angry."

"Do you have boyfriend?" Dustin asked unexpectedly, and Hannah smiled.

"I just said no one comes near me!"

"So, I have a chance!" Before she could comment, Dustin continued, "Does your father have to do with the fact prefer this place over your home?"

Hannah's eyes widened, not waiting for anyone to ask her that. Everyone knew she preferred the cafeteria to her house, but they had never asked, even because they knew why. Her father drank too much with his friends. He had never touched her, but he had secrets,

and Hannah hated to know how many people her dear father had killed. At least he only opened to her. He liked his daughter very much and did everything he could to make sure she was safe.

Dustin realized that this was a question that bothered the girl, so he decided to change the subject.

"Look, Hannah, I'm looking for fun and no one comes near you. Because of your bored face, I bet you need to have fun too and because your father is the boss, I bet you know some cool places. How about taking me out tonight?" Not even Dustin believed how brave he was, but if he didn't, he would soon lose the courage, and anything, he would never see Hannah again. He just hoped she would not tell her father. Him, Dustin was afraid of.

"You have no chance with me, Dus..."

"I don't want to date you!" Okay. It was not at *all* true. "I want to have fun. I want it to be my turnout tonight!"

Hannah laughed. Dustin was a cute and funny boy and she could barely imagine him amid all those people at night.

"Okay. Meet me at nine o'clock on McFly Street. Now, get out of here!"

Dustin smiled and picked up his things. As he was about to walk out the door, Hannah said, "And Dustin, don't be late!"

Dustin was freaking out! Freaking out! But what was he going to wear? He had a date! A real date! It's alright he'd told her they were just friends, but he'd never been alone with a girl like that and was going to have fun for the first time tonight! No arcade or D&D. It was a real teenage thing with a girl he liked very much. He had to look presentable and seem to belong to that place.

"*Dustin, are you there? Over.*" He heard Lucas in the SuperCom and rolled his eyes. His friend was messing up his *bad boy vibe!*

"I'm here. Over."

"You didn't show up in class today, and the arcade. Everyone's worried. They asked me to talk to you! Are you okay? Over."

"I have conjunctivitis!" Dustin fired. He needed an excuse not to let his friends come to see him. "I found out yesterday when I was helping my mother after school. I'm sorry I didn't warn you, but I can't get close to anyone and I didn't even think about calling or talking here, because it's bothering me a lot and it's kind of making me crazy! Over."

"Man, what a relief! I mean, this is really bad, but we thought it was worse! Get well then, and rest. When you come back, we'll give you what you've lost. Over."

"Okay. Got it, buddy! Good night. Over and out."

Dustin sighed. His friends were very nice, although they were not paying much attention to him these days. It was hard to lie to them and Dustin hated himself for it. But he had to do something alone in his life. He wanted to do something cool without depending on them. Then he would think about how to explain himself.

When he finally chose his clothes, he said good night to his mother before putting them on and waited for her to sleep to sneak out the window. It took longer than he'd expected, and Dustin cursed everything he got, running faster than he could to keep him from being late.

The moment he stepped into the meeting place, he saw Hannah's truck around the corner and he smiled as the car pulled up in front of him.

"Come in, young man!"

Dustin smiled even more and entered without hesitation.

3. House of Hell

April 30, 1987, Thursday night

They began to walk around the neighborhood, and Dustin couldn't deny that the place he had known before no longer existed. There were people everywhere, yet it was dark, and some neon lights came in from time to time. Heavy rock music dominated the air and Dustin found himself moving his foot in accordance with the beat.

"Isn't it dangerous to walk around like this with everyone watching me? Won't they tell your father?"

"We have a rule that during the night you can only have fun! You can't judge or denounce what you see, because what happens at night stays in the night. It's all forgotten during the day. Unless, of course, you see someone being raped, mugged or killed. Then you speak to my father and not to the police!"

Dustin noticed something at that moment. They were considered criminals because of their lifestyle and covert crimes, but perhaps that didn't really mean that criminals went unpunished. They were not just handed over to the police, to Hopper. It also explained why during the day, Hannah didn't like being seen with Dustin. There was no rule to forget what was seen during the day. And being the chief's daughter, she should always call attention.

"If the flow starts now, shouldn't you be working?"

"This is the first flow. The people meeting and talking. Then they dance, get drunk and/or high, and then go to the diner to recover. You have until then to have fun."

"Okay."

Hannah parked right in front of a club.

"It seems that here the second round has already begun," he said and she smiled. He took Dustin by the hand, surprising him, and guided him inside. "Don't you have to be too old enough to get in here?"

Dustin added as they were approaching the entrance that had a security guard checking the identities.

Hannah punctured the line and smiled at the man.

"Good night, Axel!"

"Good evening, Hannah. Have fun."

"I am the chief's daughter," Hannah simply said. Dustin that he was impressed with what happened. "There are also club for minors, but I thought you should know this first."

"I didn't know there's this ID thing here, either!"

"We're not that bad, Dustin! Let's go?"

He nodded, and she opened the curtain that separated them from the crowd. It was dark, but colorful lights flashed everywhere and there was a heavy rock band playing on the stage. People wore neon bracelets and that was why Dustin could see them. As well as being dark, everyone wore black clothes and made it harder.

He made a good choice by choosing a pair of black jeans and a black leather jacket. Hannah was dressed as usual. Her same style, but the blouse had changed. It was a gray regatta, which showed her black bra under her arm, 'Fuck the police' in white. He smiled. He liked her personality.

It clung to her that she was still holding his hand so she wouldn't lose sight of him. So that was why she had allowed that little gesture and not because it was really affection. It was easy to get lost there.

"Two beers please!" Hannah said and Dustin sat down in the chair on the balcony relieved.

"Thank you. I'll definitely need it."

Hannah made a face of 'I can not believe you sat', but decided to leave it. It was dark and everyone was very busy. No one would notice that he had clearly never been there before. It was not usual to sit down. They left immediately for what mattered. And it was

nothing fun.

"I don't know what you're talking about."

"What?" Dustin frowned, not really understanding Hannah.

"They're two for me." She smirked and he smiled back. He didn't expect that dark girl would have a sense of humor.

The beers arrived and the two toasted.

"To your new fun phase!"

"Cheers!"

Dustin didn't take a sip. He started to turn the 350ml bottle to the end. He swallowed and held on not to spit. Hannah laughed, drank, and said, "We'll need more, Richie!"

Dustin lost his count. He needed the courage to talk to the girl he liked. He had never gone on a date, even if they swore it wasn't. He didn't dance, but she knew that Hannah was just waiting to take him to the dance floor. Otherwise she wouldn't have brought him there, and it wasn't like the Snow Ball. It was heavy rock.

After finishing a bottle, whatever number it was, he tried to get one more, but Hannah took his hand.

"Enough, cowboy!" She smiled, amused at Dustin's nervousness, but she didn't think it was because of her, but because of the unfamiliar place and situation. "Come on!"

Hannah grabbed Dustin's arm and led him to the dance floor. When they reached a place she considered appropriate, she began to move in front of him according to the music.

Dustin was paralyzed just watching Hannah. She danced very well. She knew things. She was older and more experienced. Thank God he was very drunk.

Everything turned, the lights glowed more than usual, but he heard the beat of the song and followed the lead of Hannah moving a little.

She put her hands on his shoulders and after dancing a little with him like that, started to take off his jacket. Hannah discarded it anywhere and Dustin wasn't drunk enough not to care.

"Why would you do that? It was expensive!" It was a leather jacket, damn it!

"You can barely move with it!"

He was very dizzy. He had drunk before. Do you know when the adults get together, drink wine and let the kids take a sip? That was what he had done. It was the first time he'd actually drank and was extremely vulnerable. But after four beers, he should have collapsed already.

He could see the Hannah's red lipstick glowing with neon and felt an urge to put his mouth there, but still had a bit of consciousness. First he wouldn't dare, since he had never been kissed. And second, it was best not to risk losing her friendship. Although he wanted more, if he really didn't have a chance, being friends with her was already wonderful and he desperately needed one.

He put his hands on her waist and she turned on her back, swaying in his lower bits which didn't help him at all to control himself.

Dustin settled his hands on her waist and pulled her against his body, placing a kiss on his neck.

"You are very beautiful!" he whispered.

Hannah shivered, not hoping that one day Dustin would do something like that. Be so bold. She remembered then that it must be the alcohol talking.

She turned and didn't know why she felt like kissing him. From the moment he first appeared in her cafeteria, she knew he was a sweet boy who had no bad intentions, but she had always been rude and pushed all those who tried to get close to her. She didn't want to hurt Dustin if he fell in love. She was scared to not be good enough to deserve his love. Dustin was different and fun. She needed it and she let herself go.

She put her arms around his neck. He smiled at her. If he had been sober, his heart would have accelerated, his eyes would be wide open, and he would start talking nervously. But he was calm. The drink preventing his alarm system from telling him what was happening.

He was not much taller than her and Hannah was still wearing black heeled boots. She could look into his eyes and see the pure innocent boy in her hands. She didn't want to corrupt him, but he was too good for her. Those vibrant blue eyes, almost hidden by his dilated pupils. The way he held her around her waist and danced beside her. He was clumsy, but he was trying. The liquor also made him drop even more.

She tiptoed to reach his lips and he just watched her as if it were normal. As their lips were about to touch, Dustin changed his expression and Hannah stepped back a little trying to understand.

He turned away from her and ran off, vomiting on the first trash can he found. Hannah rolled her eyes. Of course, that would happen. It would be a reminder that she was about to mess up. Not to be carried away by a boy who deserved much more.

She went after him so he wouldn't get hurt. He was standing up completely bewildered and ashamed, when he suddenly closed his eyes, fell and ended up banging his head on the end of the balcony.

Dustin thought his life might improve, but all he saw was Hannah laughing at him while he simply did nothing. Then he realized that he was naked and tried to cover himself. The place got darker and the beat vibrated, but he couldn't find her. He wasn't even worried about being undressed. He searched for everything he could, but found no sign of it.

"He'll be fine. Just can't sleep for the next five hours and needs lots of ice. Tell him to be careful with the drink."

"Thank you, Dr. Wayne." He listened. "Dustin!" Hannah saw his eyes open as she turned. Then her face was inches from his, blocking all his sight and the light that bothers him. "Are you alright?"

He nodded.

"My head hurts." He tried to sit down and Hannah helped him. They were in a square room with white walls. They were far from the world he had known. "What happened?"

"You vomited and then passed out because of the drink. And when you fell, you hit your head on the counter."

Dustin then began to feel his stomach twitching again. He didn't remember what had happened, but his body did for sure. He made a face that Hannah recognized because it was too close to his face the last time and she quickly picked up the trash can there. Dustin wasted no time.

"You want some water?" He nodded.

He was completely frustrated. Dustin didn't remember the almost kiss, or how their bodies touched and even how dared to kiss her neck, but knew he was dancing when he vomited in front of everyone and then collapsed like an idiot. Hannah must have been utterly disgusted and irritated at having to look after him in a hospital. She should think he was ridiculous. The minimum chances he had for sure no longer existed.

"Where are we?"

"In the hospital on this side," Hannah said, handing him the glass.

At first, Dustin was astonished that the hospital was extremely clean and white, and not at all radical, to belong to that area, but then he realized that maybe health was important even to them.

He snorted and leaned his head against the pillow. Hannah noticed his irritation.

"What's it?"

"I screwed up. You must think me a complete idiot!" He decided to be honest. It wouldn't hurt since he would probably never see her again and was very frustrated. It seemed he wasn't born for relationships, let alone to get along in life. That night had been a complete disaster.

At least his coat was on the couch. His mother would kill him if it disappeared.

Hannah laughed. Usually she would think it was ridiculous, but vomiting is not something one can control, and it was his first time drinking. That's because it was beer with 5.8% alcohol, but it was already too much for him. He was still very unaccustomed.

Dustin was still lovely, despite having thrown up in front of her twice. She suspected that the second time was because of his headache. The beat was strong and had formed a rooster there. Then she remembered the ice.

Dustin groaned at the contact, but Hannah insisted on holding it to him.

"It doesn't matter if you're a complete idiot if we're just friends, right?"

At first it hurt. For a moment Dustin thought she could be liking him. Little did he know that it was because his unconscious remembered the almost kiss. Then, when he saw her face, he realized she was smiling. She was joking and he relaxed.

Hannah didn't want to get involved because it always ended up bad.

Usually the guys didn't have the guts to get close to her on behalf of her father. Only three succeeded and she tried to frighten them. No one there was very serious, but she was tired of always seeing the same things. She had never left the neighborhood. Hawkins was already small, the neighborhood then. Those three were just the same as the rest of the staff.

Dustin was original, funny. His lack of teeth was cute. She would still ask why.

She didn't want to get hurt, let alone him, but her heart told her not to mind.

"You know, I'm going to take you somewhere else tomorrow. Maybe this is not your thing. You can get on with something else."

"Do you want to try again?" Dustin's eyes sparkled as if he were a child whose mother allowed him to eat unlimited sweets. Hannah thought it was adorable. He was younger and maybe so would treat her with respect. Cherish the person who was with without hesitation.

She smiled.

"Of course. You are fun. You were right, I've been bored. I need it. Sleep a lot tomorrow afternoon because the doctor said you can't sleep tonight."

Dustin snorted. He was tired. As much as he loved Hannah, he wanted his home, his bed. If she could go with him it would be perfect, but it wasn't going to happen. At least he would see her soon. Maybe it hadn't been a complete disaster.